

**Testimony**  
**Senate Health Policy Committee**  
**Dru Szczerba**  
**Wednesday, May 13, 2009**  
**3:00 p.m.**

Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Dru Szczerba, Director of Cancer Prevention & Health Care Systems Initiatives, with the American Cancer Society. I am here in support of SB 365, legislation designed to provide minimum requirements for health and physical education in schools grades K-8.

Enacting this legislation will assure more active and healthier children. In our current economic climate, it is critical that we act to promote a healthy citizenry. This will reduce health care costs and help alleviate our fiscal crisis. Investing some money today will save millions of dollars within a few years.

And we do need to act today. Right now, children and youth are experiencing health issues that prevent them from learning and reaching their maximum potential:

- Many children come to Kindergarten unready to learn.
- Many children and youth do not have their basic needs for food, rest, shelter, and safety met; this prevents them from being able to learn.
- Increasing numbers of kids, at younger and younger ages, are developing serious health issues, such as diabetes, obesity, and asthma.